

GreenTailer. This inaugural honor is given to retailers who are protecting the environment by adopting energy conservation and Earth-friendly practices.

Providing continual and vital economic growth to local communities statewide by employing more than 2,500 Michiganders, Art Van Furniture has been continually named one of West Michigan's 101 Best and Brightest places to work. Furthermore, Art Van Furniture has an exceptional record of giving back to area charities and communities through a variety of generous financial contributions.

Again, it is my honor to rise today in honor of Art Van Furniture on the monumental occasion of its 50th anniversary. Congratulations and best wishes for another five decades.

TRIBUTE TO THE CONGREGATION
GEMILUTH CHASSODIM

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 6, 2009

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Congregation Gemiluth Chassodim of Alexandria, LA, originally known as the Hebrew Benevolent Society of Rapides. Chartered on October 2, 1859, the congregation recently celebrated its 150th anniversary of distinguished service to the Jewish community, as well as to providing faithful dedication to the Alexandria area.

The congregation first held religious services in various private homes with lay leadership. The initial Jewish sanctuary was built in 1870, and the first rabbi, Marx Klein, came in 1873. On October 14, 1873, the young congregation became one of the original charter members of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, presently known as the Union for Reform Judaism, which today represents 900 affiliate congregations in the United States and abroad. The present sanctuary was constructed in 1952.

The congregation has been served by 23 rabbis and 33 board presidents. It grew to a peak of nearly 300 families during the mid-twentieth century.

Many members of the Temple have held various leadership roles in civic and charitable organizations throughout Central Louisiana. In addition, they have made significant contributions in the fields of medicine, law, government, social services, education and the cultural life of the region.

The Temple, the Rabbi and individual members continue to play an integral part in achieving better interfaith understanding, working to strengthen the quality of life for all citizens in the communities of the region.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in commending the Congregation Gemiluth Chassodim.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PRO-
TECTING RESORT CITIES FROM
DISCRIMINATION ACT OF 2009

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 6, 2009

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, earlier today I, along with Representative DEAN HELL-

ER of Nevada introduced the Protecting Resort Cities from Discrimination Act of 2009.

If enacted, the bill would prohibit federal agencies from discriminating against cities like Scottsdale, Arizona, and Reno and Las Vegas, Nevada, simply because they are great places to visit.

Scottsdale, and resort destination cities like it, are reeling right now—not just from an economic downturn, but from stigma. Business travelers are reluctant to avail themselves of the great facilities and great value we have to offer, out of fear that they will be accused of inappropriately vacationing on the company dime.

In Arizona, some are calling it the “AIG effect.”

As a result, an already difficult situation has become dire.

Earlier this year, the Arizona Republic reported that, in Scottsdale alone, an estimated 80 events and business meetings had been canceled and local resorts had lost a combined \$23.9 million from groups fearing a public-relations backlash.

Scottsdale's hotel occupancy is down nearly 12 percent, and revenue per available room is down nearly 30 percent.

The ripple effect this has had on our economy is even worse. Restaurants, suppliers—you name it—they're all suffering.

And it doesn't help when the federal government tells the business community that they're afraid of giving us their business, too.

Cities like Scottsdale, Reno and Las Vegas should have every bit as much right to win federal meeting and conference business as anywhere else. If we can provide the right facilities at the right price, we shouldn't be punished because we also happen to be great places to visit.

If enacted, the Protecting Resort Cities from Discrimination Act would stop that from happening. The bipartisan bill would prohibit federal agencies from discriminating against cities that are perceived to be resort or vacation destinations when planning events, meetings or conferences.

I want to assure my colleagues that nothing in this bill will encourage federal agencies to undertake any additional or unnecessary travel. I firmly believe that federal agencies have an obligation to ensure that tax dollars are not wasted or misused.

All this bill would do is ensure that, when appropriate, cities like Scottsdale have a right to compete.

I want to thank Rep. HELLER for his partnership on this legislation and I urge my colleagues to support it.

H.R. 3590, SERVICEMEMBERS HOME
OWNERSHIP TAX ACT OF 2009

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 6, 2009

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I extend my support to H.R. 3590, the Service Members Home Ownership Tax Act of 2009, and thank my friend from New York, Mr. RANGEL, for introducing this legislation.

When Congress passed the first-time homebuyer tax credit in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in January of this year, it

sought to reverse the downturn in the housing market by helping qualified homebuyers purchase their first home with a maximum \$8,000 tax credit. To ensure that the credit benefited ordinary Americans and not speculators, we required that borrowers who took advantage of the credit repay it if they sold their home within three years of the purchase date.

At the time, we thought this was good policy. However, it is clear now that an exception should have been made for our servicemen and women and their families, who are often required by federal orders to redeploy overseas within a three-year period. The chance for us to correct this oversight has now come.

The Service Members Home Ownership Tax Act amends the federal tax code to provide an exemption for members of the military, CIA, and Department of State that would not require them to repay the homebuyer tax credit if they are called for overseas duty and are forced to sell their homes within three years of purchasing it. It also extends for one year the deadline for utilizing the first-time homebuyer tax credit for service members who served outside the country for at least 90 days in 2009. This provision would help returning veterans take full advantage of the tax credit, which is set to expire on November 30, 2009.

In exchange for service in war zones abroad and the sacrifices that our servicemen and women make everyday, it is only fair that our military families be able to take full advantage of the programs we enact in Congress. The Service Members Home Ownership Tax Act of 2009 is deficit neutral and reaffirms our commitment to our men and women in uniform. I am proud to provide my support to H.R. 3590.

“BRINGING HER LIGHT”—IN
HONOR OF HELEN KELLER AND
THE UNVEILING OF HER STATUE
AT THE UNITED STATES CAP-
ITOL

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 6, 2009

Mr. ADERHOLT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an American heroine, Helen Keller, on the occasion of the unveiling of her statue at The United States Capitol on Wednesday, October 7th 2009, in the Great Rotunda. Born in Tuscumbia Alabama, Helen would rise up to be one of the greatest daughters of the South. Stricken at the age of 19 months as a baby, losing both her hearing and her sight. Against all odds, armed with but only her will, courage and persistence, would come out of the dark to teach the world. And become admired for her shining example of faith and courage. Providing hope to all and championing the betterment of others. I ask that this poem penned by Albert Caswell of the Capitol Guide Service be placed in the RECORD.

BRINGING HER LIGHT

Out of the darkness . . .
Into the light . . .
From out of the darkness . . .
Can so come the light . . .
From out of such silence . . .
Can so come one's soul . . .
A voice heard, so sounding . . . so very
bright, to behold!
All in the Keller, the color of one's soul . . .